Support H.R. 3598
The Manufacturing Technology Competitiveness Act

What is the problem?

Experts are warning that the fundamental base of America's economic power – the ability to innovate – is threatened by the increasing technological competence of our trading partners. New products, processes, and materials must be conceived, created, tested, and brought to market ever faster if we are remain a creative and competitive force in world manufacturing.

The Administration in its report *Manufacturing in America: A Comprehensive Strategy to Address the Challenges to U.S. Manufacturers* highlighted the need for investment in innovation through enhanced partnerships for the transfer of technology, and support for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program. The U.S. has an excellent research foundation from which to develop manufacturing technology, but this process, and the people that do technology transfer, need help.

How does H.R.3598 address these problems?

- Establishes an **Interagency Committee on Manufacturing Research and Development** to coordinate manufacturing R&D efforts among the Federal agencies, and an **Advisory Committee of representatives from manufacturing** to guide those efforts. The President may designate existing bodies to serve as the committees.

- Establishes a three-year, **collaborative manufacturing R&D pilot grant program** at NIST. This would be a demonstration project on fostering innovation in manufacturing technology through partnerships between industry, academia, and other entities. A grant would require matching funds from participants.

- Establishes a **post-doctoral and senior research fellowship program** in manufacturing sciences at NIST. These types of fellowships will be important in developing a new base of expertise in manufacturing research and development.

- **Reauthorizes the MEP program** with a mechanism for review and re-competition of MEP Centers. H.R. 3598 would also create an **additional competitive grant program** from which MEP centers can obtain supplemental funding for manufacturing-related projects. This will allow MEP to continue to serve small and medium-sized manufacturers and develop new approaches to meeting emerging challenges in manufacturing.

- **Authorizes funding for The National Institute of Standards of Technology.** This is the nation's premier laboratory for developing new measurement techniques to support industrial standards. NIST scientists conduct research that is critical to the competitiveness of U.S. industry. Supporting NIST will have a direct, positive, and immediate impact on manufacturing.

- Establishes a **standards education grant program** at NIST to develop standards-related curricula. Standards are an increasingly important feature of technology development and international trade, but current manufacturing-related education program today do not teach standards issues to business, law, and engineering students.